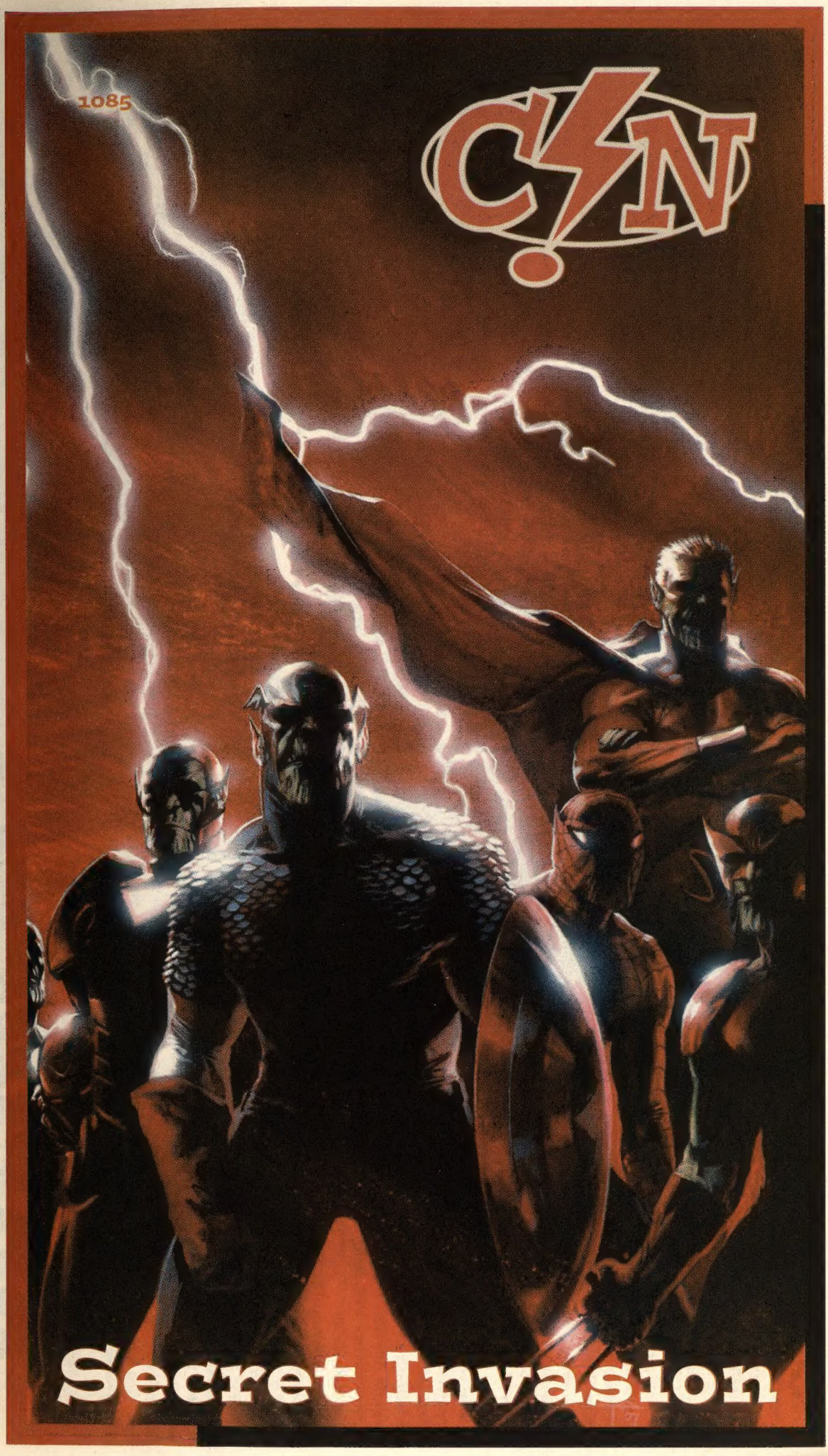
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Secret Invasion

Skrull and Crossbones

There's something very deadly in the Marvel Universe... a *lot* of somethings, in fact. And the big problem is, they look just like some of Marvel's best-known heroes...

The Skrulls are here, as readers of ***New Avengers*** discovered when an apparently-dead-Elektra transformed into something green and ugly. And readers are about to learn just how pervasive the Skrull infiltration has become...

Secret Invasion is not only a major crossover event, it just may be the *biggest* crossover event in Marvel history. It is rumored that not a single Marvel superteam will emerged unscathed as the Skrull perfidy becomes evident. And you gotta admit, *that's* big.

Some have credited *Brian Bendis & Brian Reed's* ***New Avengers: Illuminati #1*** (with its Kree-Skrull War storyline) as the foundation of the whole event, but writer *Brian Bendis* reveals that he was laying the groundwork for this story long before that time. "I was playing with Skrulls way before that. ***New Avengers #1*** has Skrulls in it. ***Avengers Disassembled*** has Skrulls in it. I was *always* planning on making this a mega-***Avengers*** arc. But it birthed itself into a summer hulabadingdo when the bosses got wind of it.

"It was very flattering that they thought so much of the story, and it's really in step with how the Avengers have grown into a franchise since we began ***New Avengers***. ***Secret Invasion*** is a book we have been planning and seeding for the last few years—and it is finally here!

"This one is pretty intensive. This one is the whole ball game—do or die. The Skrulls are a major force in the universe with strong beliefs and needs, and this invasion is a direct reflection of that."

Will Marvel's mutants (who are frequently involved in "big events" of their own) also be a part of this? "Yes," Bendis said. "Wolverine and some of the others are front and center—and the X-Men have their own ***Secret Invasion*** miniseries, since they have their own Skrull history to deal with."

So before it's over, will the entire Marvel ongoing line be tied in to ***Secret Invasion*** in some capacity? "It's hard to say 100%," editor *Tom Brevoort* replied, "but yes, virtually every corner of the Marvel Universe will be impacted by the storyline of ***Secret Invasion*** in some way or another--though that doesn't mean that every single series in the line is going to feature tie-in issues."

One report indicates that readers know who the major Skrull infiltrators are by the end of the first issue of ***Secret Invasion***--is that correct? And if so, where does the story go from there? "The first issue is top-heavy with reveals," Bendis said. "I have been showing it to some of my friends in and out of the industry, and their response has reminded me how much fun the shockers are in the first issue.

"Most Skrulls are revealed early. first or second issue. The invasion happens. The heroes feel true defeat. In future issues, we have to guess if the Marvel Universe can re-unify itself and rise up against its oppressor. *That* is the question."

Not only will some of ***Civil War's*** plotlines spill into ***Secret Invasion,*** but the book will also have ties to ***World War Hulk*** and other major Marvel event stories. "This Skrull infiltration was going on during all of those," Bendis said. "That will be expressed in the ***Avengers*** tie ins. In fact, I think I'm most excited about those tie-in issues on ***Avengers***. We rewind the clock and show a lot of stuff dramatically that's been hinted at over the past couple years. It shows all of our cards—it's a unique story telling experience.

"Though ***Secret Invasion*** is very large on its own and you need not read anything else if you choose not to, the ***Avengers*** titles, to me, make the entire event something very, very special. It's probably the largest thing I'll ever write. If you put it all together, it's twenty-four issues. Everyone's getting their face time, and the Skrulls are getting to present their ideals, and we get to see the whole story from their point of view as well. That's the thing I'm most proud of—and I'm excited to be able to offer readers that experience."

A story so big that it may undo the schisms of ***Civil War?*** Just how much of a challenge is *that* for Brevoort, the editor who is managing this mega-event? "It's a challenge, but each one of these big event series is a different sort of challenge--each one comes with problems and difficulties unique to it," Brevoort said. "So while you can apply some of what you learned in previous instances to what you're doing now, it's not really as simple as all that. And the jury is still out--it remains to be seen whether or not ***Secret Invasion*** is a bigger coordination headache than ***Civil War*** or ***House of M*** was."

Brevoort restated that the storyline was originally pitched as a smaller event. "Originally, ***Secret Invasion*** was going to be a storyline that ran exclusively in the two ***Avengers*** titles, bouncing back and forth between the two books. It was something that Brian had been building up to for a number of years. But at one of our regular creator retreats, the consensus was that we had something that was much larger than a simple ***Avengers*** story on our hands, so the decision was made to pull out all the stops, make ***Secret Invasion*** its own dedicated project, and allow it to spill over into the rest of the Marvel Universe."

And just how big are we talking here? "***Secret Invasion*** will touch upon practically all of the core titles in some way before the series is concluded," Brevoort said. "We've got a hefty number of tie-in stories, comparable to the number of tie-ins we released during ***Civil War***. But as with ***Civil War***, we're working very hard to make sure that each tie-in book has a genuine relevance to the overall event, and tells a unique story that illuminates some facet of the core ideas.

"We're also being very cutthroat in terms of insisting that the tie-in stories have genuine merit as tie-ins--there are already one or two irritated editors and creators who were told that what they had pitched didn't warrant their book carrying the tie-in banner. Of course, in any event this big there is going to be a weak link somewhere in the chain—but hopefully readers who choose to sample some or all of the tie-in stories will feel like they're getting their money's worth.

"As with ***Civil War***, as with ***World War Hulk***, we struggle mightily to make the main series and each of the assorted tie-in books able to stand on their own, and be read and enjoyed without needing to read everything. Of course, you're going to get a much richer reading experience the further out into the tie-ins you read. But the main book should stand on its own just fine," Brevoort explained.

Will any new books spin out of ***Secret Invasion?*** "There are *definitely* projects that will spin out of ***Secret Invasion***, both during and after—but you don't really expect me to tell you about them this early on, do you?" Brevoort joked. What about casualties—will any series come to and because of this storyline? "Anything's possible," he affirmed.

Following Marvel tradition, this event will have its own ***Front Line***—and Ben Urich will play a pivotal role in the creation of that series. "*Brian Reed* is writing ***Secret Invasion: Front Line***, and while the book still features Ben Urich, the focus this time is going to be less on the activities of the reporters at the ***Front Line*** newspaper and more on a diverse collection of ordinary individuals from all walks of life--a cab driver, a schoolgirl, an advertising account executive, a beat cop and a doctor, among others--as the events of ***Secret Invasion*** impact on their lives and the world around them," Brevoort said.

"It's become very important to us in a global sense to represent the point of view of the common man when we do these big events--it's a perspective that really cuts to the heart of the appeal of the Marvel Universe, one that allows us to see our heroes with a sense of wonder and awe and fear again, when they sometimes become a bit commonplace because we're all so used to reading about them up close month in and month out."

How does Marvel coordinate something this editorially complex? "Three or four times a year ,we have large creator summits with a number of our key creators in attendance, where we work out the broad strokes for the coming year or six months or whatever--so that everybody is generally on the same page," Brevoort explained. "And internally, we have a regularly scheduled weekly editorial meeting where we can bring the editorial staff up to speed on any new developments.

"In the case of specific ***Secret Invasion*** tie-in books, in addition to the editor working on them, the scripts and the final lettered books also get read over by me, to make sure that they line up correctly with events in the rest of the event. And depending on the circumstances—especially at the outset when people are first conceptualizing their tie-in stories—Brian will kibitz and contribute his ideas and his thoughts. So my office is the central hub of ***Secret Invasion***, and I'll have seen and rubber-stamped every tie-in issue before it goes off to print."

Since this is an eight-issue series, it's pretty much *the* big Marvel event for the rest of 2008; how does Bendis deal with that sort of pressure? "Well, we just got our initial numbers so *that* pressure is off," Bendis joked. "That part I had no control over anyhow—but I *do* have a a huge thank you for everyone who supported this. But the pressure about the story we're telling—that pressure I feel with *every* story, event or not. But this feels good... this feels like it's working really well."

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Considering the delays that impacted ***House of M*** and (to a much greater degree) ***Civil War,*** some readers wonder if Marvel can keep such a big event on schedule. "In all honesty, nobody can ever give you an 100% assurance that there isn't going to be a delay of some sort at some point in an event the size of this one," Brevoort said. "But I'm very confident, and I think if you look at the pace that Brian and *Leinil Yu* set on ***New Avengers*** together, you can see why I feel so confident. They did a year's worth of issues together that shipped monthly and were never late--Leinil is quick in addition to being good, and he's a dedicated craftsman who puts in the hours at the board. So I don't have any great expectation that we'll run into a slow-down...but only time will tell for certain."

Readers have seen the beginnings of the story in the various ***Secret Invasion: Infiltration*** tie-ins that have appeared in the last few months—but the Skrull saga kicks into high gear this week with this week's release of ***Secret Invasion #1,*** a $3.99 comic by *Brian Bendis & Leinil Francis Yu.*

by Cliff Biggers

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!

Comic Shop Newsarama

Produced by Comic Shop News in cooperation with Matt Brady and newsarama.com

JLA—Accent on the J

Great news for fans of ***Justice League of America:*** first, there's a new JLA title, ***Justice League,*** in the works—and second, it's being written by *James Robinson,* who recently rejoined DC as regular writer of ***Superman.***

This won't be just another ***Justice League*** book, though—because in this series, Robinson intends to make the group live up to its name. "The book is about justice and seeking justice, rather than responding to emergencies, letting the problems come to them, and being almost entirely reactive," DC Sr. VP and Executive Editor *Dan DiDio* told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady* when asked about the new series. "The team is led by Green Lantern and Green Arrow, who have in the past disagreed in points of view on what they can accomplish and what they, as heroes, should do, but when they work side by side, they have a very clear sense of goals. I think, with this group of heroes, you'll see a more clearly defined mission statement for a team as put forth by these two. Plus, they're motivated by an event in the DC Universe that makes them feel that they need to take a more active stance in regards to the need for heroes in the world today."

That motivating event is—you guessed it—a murder. Unsurprisingly, neither DiDio not Robinson are saying whose death will be the catalyst for this new series, only that it's tied to ***Final Crisis,*** and that the League's response causes a schism.

"Hal is outraged and wants to immediately go after the villain and get justice for the fallen hero," Robinson said. "Given the circumstances, the rest of the group is pulling back and waiting to see where things land when all the chips fall, but Hal refuses to, and goes off half-cocked with a plan that's none too well thought out. The only hero to go with him to help him is Green Arrow. So the team and the book will have that tone from their partnership – a little of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid."

Hal's decision has a lot to do with the book's origin, Robinson explained. "It had long bothered me that the Avengers had never really 'avenged' anything – they're either stopping a crime, or are under attack, which means that the name 'The Defenders' would've been better suited for them. Or The Crime Stoppers. It's the same thing with the Justice League – they're rarely about bringing villains to justice, or even bringing justice to the world at large. They're attacked and they defend themselves, or there's a crime in progress and they go and fight it. Again, they're candidates for calling themselves The Crime Stoppers. Or the World Police. My thinking was that if you have 'Justice' in your name, then you should do something about bringing justice to people, or bringing villains to justice. Either that, or change your name."

Joining Green Lantern and Green Arrow on the team (which will be complete and an official "team" by the end of the first arc): Ray Palmer (not as the Atom, though – at least, not at first), Supergirl, and Batwoman ("to get the iconic emblems on the team," Robinson said), Freddy Freeman ("ideally with the blue costume and a new name"), and two from left field.

One of those surprise members is Mikaal Tomas – "The blue alien from Starman, because Dan asked for a 'Starman' in the book," Robinson said. "If you remember in the final issues of ***Starman,*** Mikaal was becoming more and more militant and angry – the spirit of his alien blood was welling up into him. He'll be the one who's savage and warlike when he's fighting, but when he's not, he's this languid, charming fellow."

And the second surprise member? "This was a character that *Dan, Eddie [Berganza,* editor] and everyone else stopped cold when I suggested him (and *Geoff [Johns]* was appalled). I didn't let up, and they and finally said, 'Okay, we trust you James, if you're that passionate about the character, then use him.' And then, after reading the pages devoted to him in the first issue, they've all told me that I was able to make them care about him. He'll be the oldest character in the book – he's 90 years old, his human body has been destroyed, and he's trapped in the body of a gigantic, magic, golden gorilla. Congorilla will be on the team.

"I guarantee you, the same way that The Shade was nothing when I took him over, you will love this character when I'm done with him."

Congorilla? Does DiDio have any trepidations about a team with a big gorilla as a member? "I have incredible faith in James' ability to tell the story and explore all the possibilities of the story," DiDio said. "One of the things that makes it interesting is the diversity of the team itself – it's not a traditional Justice League of America team. There are 'A' members on it in regards to Green Lantern and Green Arrow, but we're also going to see the other characters play through that you might not have associated with the Justice League...like Congorilla. What they do, and what they help do is present different points of view on how they want to go about and achieve the different goals of the team.

"And besides, we're DC Comics. Primates belong on covers."

When the heroes begin their first mission, to find those who committed the "big murder," they quickly learn that there's far more to it than they realized. "Along the way, they realize that this is a small piece of a much bigger puzzle, and that there are a lot more villains who need to be brought in," Robinson said. "They're going to be like hunting down the DCU equivalent of the FBI's Most Wanted list. They have a reason to exist as a team, and really, can go on forever."

Robinson is also making sure that this book is set right in the middle of the DC Universe, rather than taking place in some corner, isolated from continuity. ***Justice League*** will be set squarely in the middle of the DC Universe, something akin to a third side of a triangle whose other sides are ***Justice League of America*** and ***Justice Society of America.***

"There's no point in having a book called ***Justice League*** unless you're involved in every aspect of the DCU," Robinson said. "This book is going to have as many crossovers and references to other things occurring throughout the DC Universe that I can squeeze in. I want it to feel that it's very much a part of the DC Universe, so it will be taking place in the midst of…everything. Also, they'll find themselves a headquarters, hopefully a place that isn't in use that hasn't been seen in a while."

CSNsider

•During an NPR radio piece promoting ***The Dark Tower: The Long Road Home,*** *Stephen King* announced that Marvel will be producing an adaptation of King's most acclaimed novel, ***The Stand,*** a dystopian quest saga originally published in an abridged form before being reissued in its current expanded edition. No word yet on when the adaptation will appear or who will be responsible for the script and art.

•Artist *Tim Sale* has signed an exclusive contract with Marvel, where he will reunite with frequent collaborator *Jeph Loeb;* the first project the two will work on is ***Captain America: White,*** a limited series focusing on the early years of Steve Rogers' tenure as the star-spangled hero.

•*Dan DiDio* promised fans that ***Aquaman*** would return later this year—and that the next readers see Aquaman, it will be the "best" version of the character.

•***Squadron Supreme*** will return later this year as an ongoing Marvel series—but writer *J. Michael Straczynski* will not be involved. Instead, the book will be written by *Howard Chaykin* and illustrated by *Marco Turini.*

"A couple of months back, I got a call from Joe Quesada about whether or not I would be interested in taking over the franchise, and he laid out for me a general direction that he was thinking of, and it really hit me hard. I loved it," Chaykin told ***Comic Shop Newsarama's*** *Matt Brady.* "It took the material in a very different direction, and it recreated the franchise in a very different way. It was an opportunity to get eh best of both worlds – to jump on to something that pre-existed, but to jump-start it in a way that took it in an entirely different direction, so I jumped at it. It's actually the second major writing gig that I've got going on at Marvel – the first hasn't been announced yet, so I can't talk about it – so don't ask.

"So – I was into the idea of bringing them back, and things got fairly fast-tracked, much quicker than I expected. I took Joe's premise and put it together with my take on it, and was met with universal positive response... And I found myself writing a monthly book. The third issue script is in, I'm starting on the fourth, artwork from issue #1 looks great, we've seen some art form issue #2, and we're moving ahead."

•***Astonishing X-Men*** will return with the release #25 this summer, courtesy of the new creative team of *Warren Ellis & Simone Bianchi.* Current plans call for the series to be retitled ***Astonishing X-Men: Second Stage.*** Marvel will more firmly tie the book into X-Men continuity... a tie that was first established in ***Uncanny X-Men #496.*** Ellis & Bianchi have committed to produce twenty-four issues of the series—although Marvel would be glad to let them produce more, should they be so inclined!

•Top Cow has revealed the other books in Pilot Season 2008: they will include ***Genius*** (by *Mark Bernardin, Adam Freeman, & Afua Richardson*), ***Alibi*** (by *Joshua Hale Fialkov & Jeremy Haun*), ***The Core*** (by *Jonathan Hickman & Kenneth Rocafort*), and ***Urban Myths*** (by *Jay Faerber & Jorge Molina*).

•Writer *Joe Kelly,* who has been busy at DC for the past few years, has returned to Marvel; his first work there will appear in the pages of ***Amazing Spider-Man.***

•Did you catch the unannounced "secret variant" version of ***Captain Marvel #4?***

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Well, Marvel says that there are other secret variants in the works for the following books: ***New Exiles #4, Young X-Men #1, Amazing Spider-Girl #19, Ghost Rider #22, Uncanny X-Men #497, Black Panther #36,*** and ***Cable #4.***

•Writer *Matt Fraction* will join *Ed Brubaker* on ***Uncanny X-Men*** beginning with #500, which will feature art by *Greg Land & Terry Dodson;* a few issues later, Dodson will sign on as regular artist on the series beginning with #504.

•Now here's a bargain: you can buy one copy of ***King-Size Hulk #1*** and get *both* covers (one featuring art by *Art Adams*, the other by *Frank Cho).* Each book will feature doble covers; one on the outside, the other right underneath it. The only difference will be which order the covers appear in (some will have the Adams cover on the outside, somewillh ave the co on the outside.)

•*Seth Green & Hugh Sterbakov* are working on a new ***Freshmen*** oneshot for Top Cow; look for it this summer.

Coming Comics— DC in June

Geoff Johns & Gary Frank kick off the next major Superman story arc, "Brainiac," in ***Action Comics #866.*** Decades ago, Krypton went to war with Brainiac, a cold and callous alien obsessed with the control of knowledge. Superman believes he's faced Brainiac before, but he's about to learn the truth behind his close encounters as he heads down the road to his greatest triumph...and greatest tragedy.

"Batman R.I.P." continues in ***Batman #678,*** by *Grant Morrison, Tony Daniel, & Sandu Florea.* Batman's mysterious adversary has won. All is lost for the Dark Knight. Bruce Wayne is now deranged and dissociated, wandering homeless in the alleys of Gotham City. Is there a chance that Bruce can rebuild his Batman identity from scratch, or is this truly the end for one of the world's finest heroes?

Batgirl tracks Catwoman and the notebook stolen from Commissioner Gordon to a posh nightclub where costumes are optional in ***Batman Confidential #18*** by *Fabian Nicieza & Kevin Maguire.*

The former leader of the Outsiders—Nightwing—makes a guest appearance in ***Batman & The Outsiders #8*** by *Chuck Dixon, Julian Lopez, & Bit.* As the Outsiders' situation deep in the heart of China worsens, the team must turn to the member they trust least to bail them out: Batgirl.

In order to correct the past and save the future, Booster Gold faces a startling reality — someone from his past must live and someone must die! Who'll it be? Find out in ***Booster Gold #10*** by *Geoff Johns, Jeff Katz, Dan Jurgens, & Norm Rapmund.*

Nanda Parbat is under siege, and to keep his mystical realm from being overtaken by insurgents, Deadman must find a champion to protect it! Boston Brand elects Green Arrow! Can two heroes so similar in temperament but so different in ability pool their resources to survive — let alone triumph? Find out in ***The Brave & the Bold #14*** by *Mark Waid & Scott Kolins.*

A killer stalks the city, taxing the wits of Batman, the Riddler and every other detective in Gotham. The Dark Knight's quest to unravel the truth behind the seemingly unrelated murders is complicated by the surprise return of a fan-favorite character in ***Detective #845*** by *Paul Dini, Dustin Nguyen, & Derek Fridolfs.*

Grant Morrison & J.G. Jones deliver more surprises in ***Final Crisis #2.*** Meet Japan's number one pop culture heroes, the Super Young Team and their languid leader, Most Excellent Superbat! Join legendary wrestler Sonny Sumo and super escape artist Mister Miracle as they team to face the offspring of the Anti-Life Equation! See Earth's superheroes mourn one of their oldest allies! Witness costumed criminals sinking to new depths of cowardice and depravity as Libra takes things too far! Uncover the doomsday secrets of the poisoned city of Blüdhaven! Learn the shocking identity of the prime suspect in the murder of a god! And read on if you dare as Batman becomes the first of Earth's champions to face the Fallen of Apokolips. All this and a spectacular return from the dead...

Sinestro gets him time in the spotlight in ***Green Lantern #32,*** a "Secret Origin" installment by *Geoff Johns, Ivan Reis, & Oclair Albert.* Sinestro has been sent to Earth on a sacred mission, one that this new rookie Hal Jordan is getting in the way with. Plus, one of Hal Jordan's first enemies is born as a bizarre experiment backfires and another is unknowingly stalked for his connection to the Blackest Night!

The epic battle against Mongul begins in ***Green Lantern Corps #25*** by *Peter Tomasi, Patrick Gleason, & Prentis Rollins,* as the true origin of the Black Mercy is revealed. The Green Lantern Corps find itself pitted not only against Mongul to save Sodam and Arisia, but an entire planet made of Black Mercys that seem to be under the control of a quite possibly darker and more disturbing force.

Red Tornado is given another chance at life in ***Justice League of America #22*** by *Dwayne McDuffie & Ed Benes.* The problem is that the dormant Amazo program within him wants the death of all League members!

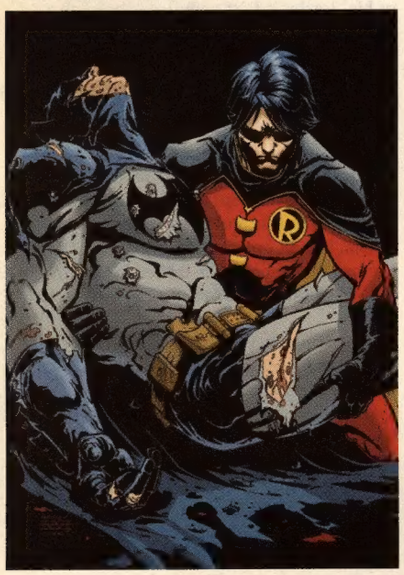
In Part 2 of "Gog," the Justice Society of America is split down the middle as their allegiance to the being known as Gog has disrupted the team. Are Gog's motives on the level, or is it all some insidious plot to

destroy mankind? Find out in ***Justice Society of America #17*** by *Geoff Johns, Alex Ross, Dale Eaglesham, & Prentis Rollins.*

After far too long a wait, ***Manhunter*** returns in June with #31, courtesy of *Mark Andreyko* and new artist *Michael Gaydos.* Los Angeles is Manhunter's town — so when Kate Spencer learns of the disappearance of hundreds of women along the Mexican border, she's on the case both as law-breaking D.A. and costumed vigilante. Meanwhile, Kate's bloodline tie to the JSA returns to haunt her — and it looks like her sidekick's most notorious supervillain ex-boss is doing the same to him.

It's all-out war for control of hell in *Keith Giffen, Matt Clark, & Stephen Segovia's* ***Reign in Hell #1,*** in which Lord Satanus sets out to dethrone Neron at all costs. As the battle begins, various parties are drafted into service — but will they choose to stand with the devil they know or a new and possibly worse evil? Plus, a backup feature starring Dr. Occult, who receives a shocking visitation on the eve of the war in hell!

The events of "Batman R.I.P." carve a path of destruction through Tim's life, threatening to rip apart the entire foundation of what made him choose to take on the role of Robin in the first place. Tim's on the run and, with Batman's life at stake, he can't afford to make one misstep. Find out how his life changes in ***Robin #175*** by *Chuck Dixon, Chris Batista, & Cam Smith.*



From the rooftops in Robin to Gotham Underground, Spoiler's identity has remained a mystery — until now. All is revealed in *Chuck Dixon, Rafael Albuquerque, & Victor Ibanez's* ***Robin/Spoiler Special,*** in which Robin and Spoiler team up to take down a kidnapping ring, hit up an illegal warehouse party and finish Tim's algebra homework.

James Robinson takes over as the new ongoing writer beginning with ***Superman #677,*** as changes abound in the life of the Man of Steel! A frighteningly powerful new presence declares Metropolis his, a monster strikes the harbor of the City of Tomorrow, Green Lantern guest-stars for a unique game of fetch, and the Science Police arrive on the scene. And this is only issue one of the new run!

The Tangent Earth's Superman has taken over his world and made it a safer place, unless someone crosses him! The DCU's Green Lantern and the Flash are in deep trouble, and getting back to their Earth may only make things worse! Yep, it sounds like there are problems galore in ***Tangent: Superman's Reign #4*** by *Dan Jurgens, Ron Marz, Jamal Igle, Robin Riggs, & Fernando Pararin...*

Superstar artist *Mark Bagley* joins award-winning writer *Kurt Busiek* to launch ***Trinity,*** a year-long weekly series focusing on DC's Big Three—Superman, Batman, & Wonder woman. They're not the only heroes in this series: virtually every superhero in the DCU will make an appearance before it's all over. As the series begins, readers will discover a mysterious connections between several villains who are watching the Trinity... Each issue will feature a lead story by Busiek & Bagley, along with a related backup story by *Fabian Nicieza* (with art by *Scott McDaniel & Andy Owens, Tom Derenick & Wayne Faucher,* or *Mike Norton & Jerry Ordway)* focusing on some of the other important players in this major storyline. The first issue will include an extra eight pages of story and art at no additional charge.

DC collected editions include:

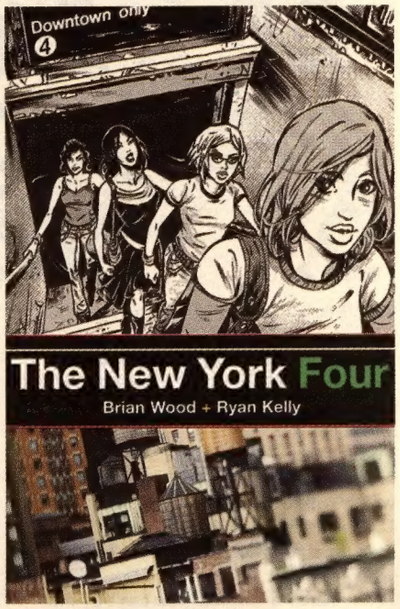
- ***Batman & Son TP,*** collecting ***Batman #s 655-658 & 663-666;***
- ***Batman: Faces TP,*** collecting the *Matt Wagner* two-face story arc;
- ***Batman: Going Sane TP,*** collecting ***Legends of the Dark Knight #s 65-68 & 100;***
- ***The Brave & the Bold Volume 2: The Book of Destiny HC,*** collecting ***B&B #s 7-12;***
- ***Countdown to Adventure TP,*** collecting the eight-issue miniseries;
- ***Countdown to Final Crisis Volume 2 TP,*** collecting ***Countdown #s 38-26;***
- ***Countdown: Arena TP,*** collecting the four-issue miniseries;
- ***DC Universe Special: Reign in Hell 80-Page Giant,*** reprinting stories from ***Superman #71, Superman: Man of Steel #15,*** and ***Action #680;***
- ***Death of the New Gods HC,*** collecting the eight-issue *Jim Starlin-Matt Banning* miniseries;
- ***Diana Prince: Wonder Woman Volume Two TP,*** collecting more 1970s Wonder Woman tales by *Mike Sekowsky, Robert Kanigher,* and others;
- ***Green Arrow/Black Canary: Road to the Altar TP,*** collecting ***Birds of Prey #109, Black Canary #s 1-4, & Black Canary Wedding Planner;***
- ***JLA Volume One Deluxe Edition,*** an oversized hardcover collecting ***JLA #s 1-9*** by *Grant Morrison, Howard Porter,* and others, along with ***Secret Files & Origins #1;***
- ***Metal Men HC,*** collecting the eight-issue miniseries;
- ***Showcase Presents Hawkman Volume Two TP,*** collecting ***Hawkman #s 12-27, Atom & Hawkman #s 39-45, Atom #31,*** and ***Brave & Bold #70;***
- ***Showcase Presents the House of Secrets TP,*** collecting tales of the weird and supernatural from ***House of Secrets #s 81-98,*** originally published between 1969 and 1972;
- ***Spirit Archives Volume 52 HC,*** collecting the rarely-seen ***Spirit*** daily comic strip, which ran from October 13, 1941, until March 11, 1944;
- ***Teen Titans Spotlight: Wonder Girl,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries; and
- ***Trials of Shazam Volume 2 TP,*** collecting the last six issues of the twelve-part series.

Coming Comics: Wildstorm/DC in June

The espionage misadventure series makes its comics debut with the release of ***Chuck #1*** by *Peter Johnson* (series co-executive producer), *Zev Barow* (series writer), *Jeremy Haun, & Phil Noto.* In this globe-trotting, action-packed adventure, Chuck will see many exotic locales, dodge numerous bullets, and be tortured by the world's greatest...tickler?

Wildstorm collected editions include:

- ***The Authority: Prime TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries; and
- ***WildStorm: Revelations TP,*** collecting the six-issue miniseries.



Coming Comics: Minx/DC in June

Just starting her freshman year at NYU, Riley is about to find out what an adventure — and a mystery — living in New York City can be in ***The New York Four,*** an original graphic novel by *Brian Wood & Ryan Kelly.*

Coming Comics— Vertigo/DC in June

Matt Wagner joins with artist *Amy Reeder Hadley* to kick off a new ongoing series focusing on one of DC's most enigmatic mystery women, ***Madame Xanadu.*** Issue #1 opens into a medieval kingdom beset by intrigue and foul sorcery. A fair sylph with magic of her own is thrown into the world of war and men — where she encounters a dark stranger who knows not only her past, but her most intimate future as well. As the series progresses, readers will learn more about her complex relationship with the Phantom Stranger, among other surprises.

Vertigo collected editions include:
•***Army@Love Volume 2: Generation Pwned TP,*** collecting ***Army@Love #s 6-12;***
•***American Virgin Volume 4: Around the World TP,*** collecting the final nine issues of the acclaimed and too-short-lived series; and
•***DMZ Volume 5: The Hidden War TP,*** collecting ***DMZ #s 23-28.***

Coming Comics: CMX/DC in June

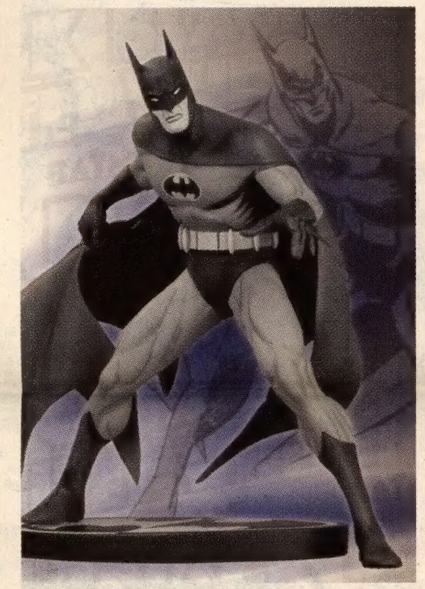
Kaoru Mori moves her study of maids in English society forward from Victorian to Edwardian England in ***Shirley Volume 1.*** When Miss Bennett gets too busy running the pub she inherited, she decides that she needs some help at home. She posts a notice for a maid and young Shirley Madison replies. Shirley can clean and cook as well as anyone – even if she's only thirteen years old!

Coming from DC Direct & DC Unlimited

The ***JLA Trophy Room*** program continues with the ***Bat-Signal Prop Replica,*** a must-have on any wall or ceiling for the ultimate Batman fan! With the flick of a switch, this metal-encased device projects a light-up Bat-Signal an impressive 16 feet! Powered by a plug-in, UL adapter and two ultra-bright bulbs, the piece also includes a fan to keep it cool, along with a swivel feature enabling the Bat-Signal to pan across the room. This prop replica measures approximately 12" tall x 2.25" wide x 9" deep and is packaged in a 4/C box. Also included are a 4/C Certificate of Authenticity, a "Guide to the Trophy Room" brochure written by best-selling author *Brad Meltzer,* and one replacement bulb. (Nov)

DC Direct has oodles of special offerings timed to coincide with the release of ***The Dark Knight*** this summer, including ***The Dark Knight: The Joker 1:6 Scale Deluxe Collector Figure, The Dark Knight: Batman 1:6 Scale Deluxe Collector Figure, The Dark Knight: The Joker Statue, The Dark Knight: Batman Bust, The Dark Knight: Batman Statue, The Dark Knight: The Joker Bust, The Dark Knight Grappling Launcher Prop Replica,*** and ***The Dark Knight Batarangs Prop Replica.*** (July)

Sculptor *Derek Miller* translates one of the segments of the upcoming direct-to-DVD animated feature ***Batman: Gotham Knights*** into the third dimension with the ***Batman Black & White Special Edition—Batman: Gotham Knight Statue.*** This statue measures approximately 7" tall. (Nov)



The incomparable art of veteran illustrator *Jim Aparo* is the inspiration for the ***Jim Aparo Batman: Black & White Statue,*** sculpted by *Mike Locatio.* This rendering of the Caped Crusader is based on Aparo cover image from ***Detective Comics #443.*** (Nov)

The long-out-of-print ***Vertigo Tarot Deck,*** featuring text by *Rachel Pollack,* art by *Dave McKean,* and an introduction by *Neil Gaiman,* is reoffered in a deluxe 20th anniversary edition, complete with gold foil stamping. With evocative card images and illustrations by award-winning artist *Dave McKean,* the 78 tarot cards in the set are designed to be utilized by any practitioner of tarot. The Major Arcana of the set features an array of Vertigo characters.

The third member of DC's Trinity gets the upscale statue treatment with the release of the ***Wonder Woman 1:4 Scale Museum Quality Statue,*** sculpted by *Andy Bergholtz.* This stunning 18" Wonder Woman mixed-media statue, composed of resin, metal, and an expertly crafted fabric outfit, shows the Amazon Princess in all her fury. (Nov)

DC's posters include ***Batman: Gotham Underground,*** featuring the *Jim Calafiore* covers of the entire ***Gotham Underground*** miniseries, and ***Wonder Woman #13,*** featuring art by *Terry & Rachel Dodson.* (Nov)

DC's ***Superman/ Batman Series 6 Action Figures*** include four figure inspired by the art of *Ethan Van Sciver,* including ***Batman, Superman, Green Lantern, & Despero.*** (Nov)

The third wave of ***World of Warcraft Action Figures*** includes ***Blood Elf Paladin Quin'thalan Sunfire, Dranei Mage Tamuura, Undead Rogue Skeeve Sorrowblade, and Human Priestess Sister Benedron.*** (Nov)

Coming Comics— Marvel in June

Who is "The Other Spider-Man? That's the question that *Bob Gale & Mike McKone* answer in ***Amazing Spider-Man #562.*** A week later, the same team reveals what happens when Spider-Man walks into the villain-filled Bar With No Name...

In preparation for the relaunch of ***Astonishing X-Men*** with the new creative team of *Warren Ellis & Simone Bianchi,* Marvel presents the ***Astonishing X-Men Sketchbook*** in June. See the costume redesigns for Wolverine, Cyclops, Emma Frost and more, including the first up-close look at the blue-prints for the new "X-Men Mansion," courtesy of *Salvador Larocca.*

With World War II's greatest heroes mysteriously transported to 2008, it takes the Mighty Avengers to bring them in before the world realizes that the Invaders are back…including the original Captain America. See what happens when as *Jim Krueger, Alex Ross, & Steve Sadowski* continue the cross-time drama in ***Avengers/Invaders #2.***

Are there two guys running around in Captain America outfits? Yep—and you can find out more about just who they are in ***Captain America #39*** by *Ed Brubaker & Steve Epting.*

The Gods walk the Earth again in ***Eternals #1*** by *Charles Knauf, Daniel Knauf, & Daniel Acuna.* In ancient times, the Celestials, a race of cosmic giants, came to Earth and created a race of powerful immortal beings: The Eternals! For a time, primitive man worshiped them as gods, but eventually they disappeared. Now, they have returned! One of the Celestials now towers over Golden Gate Park, standing in judgment over the Earth… but does he bring the end of the world?

Who are the New Defenders, and why does their appearance on Earth foretell the eventual extinction of mankind? Who has liberated Doctor Doom from his incarceration awaiting trial, and why? *Mark Millar & Bryan Hitch* answer these questions and more in ***Fantastic Four #558.***

Richard Corben, who contorted the fiction of *Edgar Allan Poe* in a prior miniseries, offers his twisted take on the work of *Howard Phillips Lovecraft* in ***Haunt of Horror: Lovecraft,*** a three-issue miniseries.

She will be the mightiest champion of her time. He was the mightiest monster of his. What happens when these legends clash will change the course of history for the warrior known as Thundra—and you can see it happen in ***Hulk: Raging Thunder,*** a oneshot by *Jeff Parker & Mitch Breitweiser.*

Mark Millar & John Romita Jr's sold-out ***Kick Ass #1*** returns in the expanded ***Kick Ass #1 Director's Cut,*** which adds the never-before-seen script, character designs, penciled artwork, and more.

Roy Thomas & Hugo Petrus adapt *Alexandre Dumas'* classic novel in the six-part ***Marvel Illustrated: The Three Musketeers,*** which begins when a young d'Artagnan, after a series of misadventures, attempts to join the King's elite fighting force—The Musketeers! Joined by Porthos, Aramis and Athos, the four make short work of the Crown's adversaries. But little do they know, the evil Cardinal Richelieu is creating a counter force of his own...

Delayed from March, *Paul Jenkins & Paolo Rivera's* ***Mythos: Captain America*** is back on Marvel's schedule for June release.

Avenger versus Avenger. Hero versus hero! Norman Osborn versus Captain Marvel?? The Initiative versus an army of Super-Skrulls? Is Tony Stark really a... ? And who's that guy with an eye patch coming to save the day?? The answers to these and many other questions await readers in ***Secret Invasion #3*** by *Brian Bendis & Leinil Francis Yu.* And the story continues in a number of ***Secret Invasion*** tie-ins, including ***Mighty Avengers #15, New Avengers #42, Avengers: The Initiative #14, Secret Invasion: Fantastic Four #2, Secret Invasion: Runaways/Young Avengers #1, Captain Britain & MI:13 #2, Ms. Marvel #28, Incredible Hercules #118,*** and ***Secret Invasion: Who Do You Trust?*** (a collection of five short stories).

Crime novelist *Victor Gischler* joins artist *Jefte Palo* for ***Punisher Max: Little Black Book,*** a oneshot that finds the Punisher riding alongside Vette, whose little black book offers him a way to get inside the impenetrable fortress that protects Miami drug lord Carlos Ramirez.

Matt Fraction & Patrick Zircher offer another look at Thor's past in ***Thor: Ages of Thunder—Reign of Blood.***

Are you ready for Ultimate Salem's Seven? Who are Salem's Seven, and what do they want with the Human Torch? Unfortunately, Johnny and the rest of the FF are dealing with a troubling enemy of their own at the Baxter Building, as the enigmatic woman known as Agatha Harkness introduces her new regime in ***Ultimate Fantastic Four #55*** by *Mike Carey & Tyler Kirkham.*

Brian Bendis & Butch Guice reveal the conspiracies behind the entire Ultimate Universe in the five-part ***Ultimate Origins.*** When they first met, Bruce Banner mysteriously warned Spider-Man that "Everything is connected." Now it's time to discover the jaw-dropping secrets that men have fought and died to protect. From the dark days of World War II to the frightening present, journey through history to learn what's really behind the Super Soldier and Weapon X programs–and how heroes such as Captain America, Nick Fury and Wolverine have more in common than codenames and costumes.

The six-part "War of the Symbiotes" by *Brian Bendis & Stuart Immonen* kicks off in ***Ultimate Spider-Man #123.*** When Spidey's most fearsome foe strikes, it looks bad for the outmatched web-slinger, but Silver Sable and her Wild Pack may turn the tide! Have they come to save Spider-Man or is their motive something more sinister?

The ***Civil War*** team of *Mark Millar & Steve McNiven* kick off the eight-part "Old Man Logan" in ***Wolverine #66.*** Nobody knows what happened on the night the heroes fell. All we know is that they disappeared and evil triumphed and the bad guys have been calling the shots ever since. What happened to Wolverine is the biggest mystery of all. For fifty years, no one has heard hide nor hair from him…and in his place stands an old man called Logan.

A group of British aristocrats relocate to Louisiana to engage in the sort of blood-sports now illegal in their home country. But they didn't plan on crossing paths with Wolverine... which is just what they do in ***Wolverine: Dangerous Game,*** a oneshot by *Simon Spurrier, Rick Remender, Ben Oliver, & Jerome Opena.*

Daniel Way & Stephen Segovia present the origin of Daken, the son of Wolverine, in ***Wolverine: Origins #26.*** Decades ago, during his time in Jasmine Falls, Wolverine fathered a child…a child whom he thought died with its mother. But Wolverine was mistaken—the child grew into a man. And that man just may be the deadliest being on the face of the Earth.

World War Hulk's aftermath continues in ***Skaar: Son of Hulk,*** a new series by *Greg Pak & Ron Garney.* On an alien planet shattered by war, no one is stronger than Skaar, the savage Son of Hulk. But as a Fillian warlord, an Imperial princess, and a mysterious Earthman spread chaos through the wastelands, will Skaar save the puny survivors -- or eat them?

After the recent loss of both Wolfsbane and Layla Miller, and the destruction and evacuation of the former Mutant Town, X-Factor is left questioning their purpose more than ever. At that lowest moment, Val Cooper and the O*N*E* step in, giving the group an ultimatum that will change everything about the team. Find out what that ultimatum is in ***X-Factor #32*** by *Peter David & Pablo Raimondi.*

Cyclops sends Logan on a surgical strike mission in ***X-Force: Ain't No Dog,*** a oneshot by *Charlie Huston, Jason Aaron, Jefte Palo, & Wether Dell'Edera.*

X-Men: Divided We Stand comes to a conclusion in ***Uncanny X-Men #499*** by *Ed Brubaker & Mike Choi*. Cyclops and Emma come face to face against former allies. Colossus, Wolverine and Nightcrawler scramble to get out of Russia alive. Witness the new status quo for the X-Men that will define their future!

Kate Bishop comes face to face with Clint Barton in ***Young Avengers Presents #6***, a standalone tale by *Matt Fraction & Alan Davis*.

Marvel collected editions include:

- ***Astonishing X-Men Volume 4: Unstoppable TP,*** collecting ***Astonishing X-Men #s 19-24 & Giant-Size #1;***
- ***Anita Blake, Vampire Hunter: Guilty Pleasures Volume 2 HC,*** collecting the final six issues of the twelve-part adaptation;
- ***Avengers: The Initiative Volume 2: Killed in Action Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Avengers: The Initiative #s 7-13 & Annual #1;***
- ***Captain America: The Death of Captain America Volume 1 TP,*** collecting ***Captain America #s 25-30;***
- ***Captain America: The Chosen Premiere HC,*** collecting the six-part series by *David Morrell & Mitch Breitweiser;*
- ***Essential Captain Marvel Volume 1 TP,*** collecting ***Marvel Super-Heroes #s 12 & 13*** and ***Captain Marvel #s 1-21;***
- ***Eternals by Jack Kirby Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the original ***Eternals #s 1-11;***
- ***Eternals by Neil Gaiman TP,*** collecting the series that brought the Eternals back into the Marvelverse;

- ***Fantastic Four: Lost Adventures by Stan Lee Premiere HC,*** collecting ***FF: The Lost Adventure, The Last FF Story,*** plus rare Stan stories from ***FF #s 296 & 543;***
- ***House of M: Avengers TP,*** collecting the five-issue miniseries;
- ***Hulk Vs. the Marvel Universe TP,*** collecting some of the Green-skinned Goliath's most memorable slugfests;
- ***Incredible Hercules: Against the World Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Incredible Hercules #s 112-115 & Hulks Vs Hercules:When Titans Collide;***
- ***Iron Man: Haunted TP,*** collecting ***Iron Man #s 21-28 & Annual #1;***
- ***Kabuki: The Alchemy HC,*** collecting the nine-issue series by *David Mack;*
- ***Jack Kirby's Galactic Bounty Hunters Volume 1 TP,*** collecting the Kirby-inspired series by *Lisa Kirby, Steve Robertson, & Mike Thibodeaux;*
- ***Marvel Adventures The Avengers Volume 6: Mighty Marvels Digest,*** reprinting ***Marvel Adventures the Avengers #s 20-23;***
- ***Marvel Atlas TP,*** collecting the two geographical guidebooks to the Marvelverse;
- ***Marvel Masterworks: Atlas Era Tales of Suspense Volume 2 HC,*** collecting ***Tales of Suspense #s 11-20,*** featuring material by *Stan Lee, Jack Kirby, Steve Ditko, Don Heck, Reed Crandall,* and others;
- ***Marvel Masterworks: Sgt. Fury & His Howling Commandos Volume 2 HC,*** collecting ***Sgt. Fury #s 14-23 & Annual #1*** by *Stan Lee & Dick Ayers;*
- ***Marvel Zombies 2 HC,*** collecting the five-part miniseries;
- ***Mighty Avengers Volume 2: Venom Bomb Premiere HC,*** collecting ***Mighty Avengers #s 7-11;***
- ***Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe A to Z Premiere HC,*** featuring another 240-page helping of Marveldom from Crimson Dynamo to the Elements of Doom;
- ***Terror Inc. TP,*** collecting the five-issue miniseries;
- ***New Avengers Volume 7: The Trust TP,*** collecting ***New Avengers #s 32-37 & Annual #2;***
- ***Silver Surfer: In thy Name TP,*** collecting the four-part miniseries;
- ***Ultimate Fantastic Four Volume 10: Ghosts TP,*** collecting ***Ultimate Fantastic Four #s 47-53;***
- ***Ultimate X-Men Volume 8 HC,*** collecting ***Ultimate X-Men #s 75-88;***
- ***Wolverine: Enemy of the State Ultimate Collection TP,*** compiling the entire saga in one volume;
- ***World War Hulk—Damage Control TP,*** collecting ***Aftersmash*** and ***Damage Control #s 1-3;***
- ***X-Factor Visionaries: Peter David Volume 4 TP,*** collecting ***X-Factor #s 84-89 & Annual #8;*** and
- ***The Zombie: Simon Garth TP,*** collecting the four-issue miniseries.

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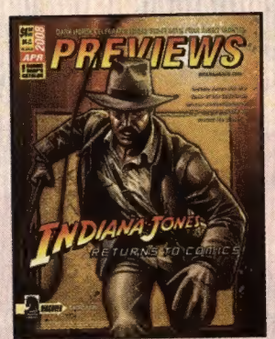
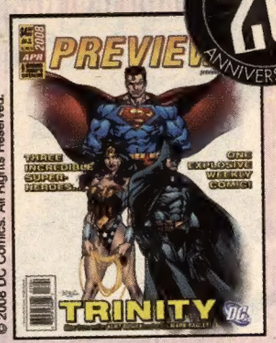


INDIANA JONES AND THE TOMB OF THE GODS—Following hot on the heels of Dark Horse's official adaptation (and the May premiere) of the blockbuster motion picture, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull*, Indiana Jones is off on another globe-hopping adventure in **Indiana Jones and the Tomb of the Gods**, filled with ancient treasures, exotic locales, Nazis, and a cover by Tony Harris!



TRINITY #1—DC's new weekly series, **Trinity**, explodes in an extra-sized debut issue featuring art by fan-favorite Mark Bagley & Art Thibert, with lead stories and dialogue by Kurt Busiek, exploring the unusual bond of DC's top three characters, Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman!

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500+ pages of cool stuff that starts shipping in June!

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CHECK OUT THESE OFFERINGS:

Conan the Cimmerian #0—*Special Introductory Price!* Tim Truman and Tomás Giorello take **Conan** back to the place of his birth in this debut issue, featuring an adaptation of Robert E. Howard's poem, "Cimmeria!"

Madame Xanadu #1—Legendary writer/artist Matt Wagner and rising star artist Amy Reeder Hadley present Vertigo's newest ongoing fantasy epic, **Madame Xanadu**, the story of an ageless fortune teller whose power of sight can change the course of human events.

War Heroes #1—Writer Mark Millar (*Civil War, The Ultimates, Kick Ass* and *Wanted*) and artist Tony Harris (*Starman, Ex Machina*) bring you **War Heroes**, the series that charts a new course in superhero action!

Eternals #1—Following up on Neil Gaiman's best-selling series (and a recent appearance in *The Incredible Hercules*), writers Charles and Daniel Knauf, and artist Daniel Acuña, continue the saga of Jack Kirby's **Eternals** in a new series!

AND BE SURE NOT TO MISS:

- **Dark Knight Statues, Busts, & Figures** from DC Direct!
- **Iron Man Movie Minimates** in the Toys Section!
- **Family Guy: Blue Harvest 2009 Calendar** in the Calendars Section!
- **Simpsons: Rosebud 3.5" Bear Qee Figures** in the Designer Toys Section!
- And Much, Much More!

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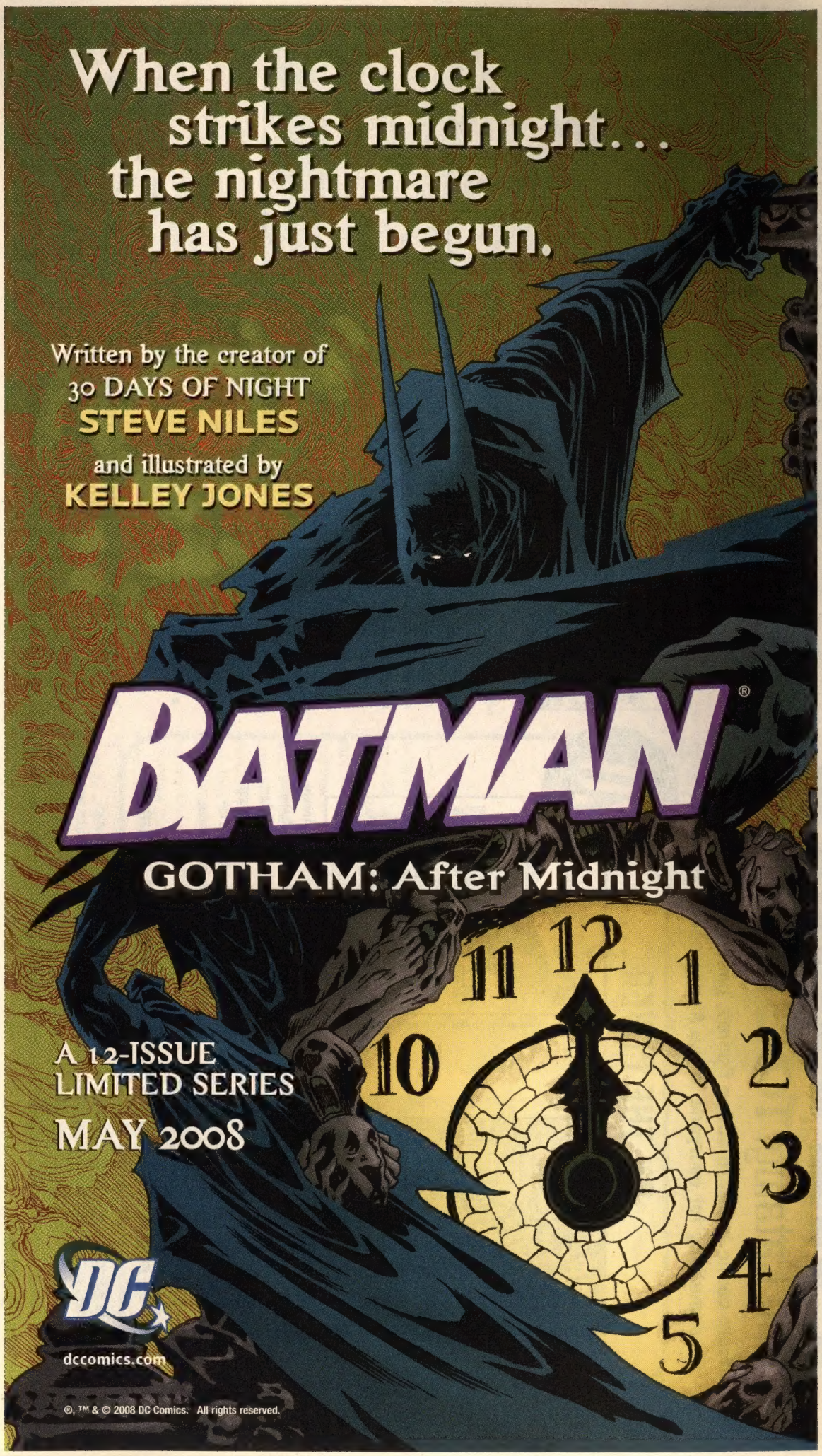
When the clock strikes midnight... the nightmare has just begun.
Written by the creator of 30 DAYS OF NIGHT
STEVE NILES
and illustrated by
KELLEY JONES
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GOTHAM: After Midnight
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